

Correspondence.

THE PREVENTION OF OFFENSIVE SOUNDS IN ROOMS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

SIR,—In order to drown the sound between an upper and lower room of large dimensions, the usual plan of pugging, as advised under the head of answers to correspondents, in *THE BUILDER*, No. 86, has been adopted; but the sound is still audibly conveyed through the ceiling into the lower room. Now, what is the plan you would recommend to destroy the sound?

Cambridge, Oct. 5.

T. W.

[We incline to think there must be some imperfection in the manner wherein the application has been made, as we have never found it fail except in cases where a direct and offensive concussion has been occasioned over the apartments required to be quiet. Perhaps some of our correspondents may be in possession of some secret for the prevention of the offensive effects of sound in rooms.—Ed.]

THE "JENNY" USED ON SCAFFOLD-FRAMES.

SIR,—I should be much obliged if one of your readers could inform me of the newest improvements that have been effected in the "jenny" used on the scaffold-frames, and where drawings of the same may be obtained.

I am, Sir,

X. Y. Z.

Miscellaneous.

FRENCH AND ENGLISH MINES.—At the meeting of the British Association, for the promotion of science, held at York, Colonel Sykes, F.R.S., president, in the chair.—Mr. G. Porter read a long and interesting paper, compiled from documents furnished to him by the French government, "On the Mining Industry of France," which contained some curious and interesting comparisons with that of this country. In 1814 the quantity of coals raised in France was but 665,610 tons; in 1826 it amounted to 1,301,000 tons, whilst in 1836 it was 2,544,000. In 1841 the number of coal mines at work was 256, employing 29,500 workmen, who on the average raised 116 tons each. In 1836 the value of a ton of coals was 11s. 3d., whilst in 1841 it was reduced to 7s. 9d. There was no data by which to ascertain the amount of mineral fuel which was annually raised in the United Kingdom, but it was probably ten times greater in quantity than in France. From parliamentary returns, it appeared that in 1841 the quantity of coal transmitted coastwise was 7,410,000 tons, and that exported 1,840,000, besides which a very large quantity was used upon the spot in various manufacturing districts where it is obtained. It is a curious fact that in England the average amount raised by one man is 253 tons, being 120 per. cent. higher than in France. An elaborate memoir was then given in the paper on the iron districts, in which were 12, containing 894 establishments in 1836. In 1841 these had increased to 1023. In 1836 there were 57,537 men employed, who created property to the amount of 4,957,000l., whilst in 1841 the number of hands was reduced to 47,830, although the value of the production had increased to 5,671,000l. For one ton of pig iron manufactured in France there were four in England, although it was singular, that whilst in France 47,000 persons were employed, those in England were but 42,000. This extraordinary discrepancy the author attributed to the deficiency in the process of manufacture and the additional cost of fuel. The production of other metals was of small importance, and he considered that a very fair prospect of future legitimate and extensive commerce from this country might be looked forward to in France.

NEW THEATRE IN SHOREDITCH.—Several houses have been pulled down during the last few days opposite the terminus of the Eastern Counties Railway, High-street, Shoreditch, for the purpose of constructing a spacious theatre, which is to be under the direction of Mr. Nelson Lee. The works have already commenced.

NAMING AND NUMBERING OF STREETS.—(From the Herald.)—The new Metropolitan Building Act, which comes into operation on the 1st of January, creates a new board for the general superintendence of buildings in London. The new board would render the public an important service if they would undertake such a registration of houses that every house in a street should have a distinct number, and that no two streets should be called by the same name. Great inconvenience is now occasioned by the neglect of this very simple matter of municipal arrangement. The last Act for the registration of voters directs that in every claim to vote, the number of the house shall be inserted for which the vote is claimed; but in some streets many of the houses are without numbers, and the instances are numerous of two or more houses in a street having the same number. In Regent-street, St. John's, Westminster, there are five Nos. 13, and six Nos. 14. Equal or greater confusion arises from the multiplication of the same street names. We find in a London Directory 28 King-streets, 20 Queen-streets, 26 Charles-streets, 25 Church-streets, 23 John-streets, 4 Water-lanes, 2 Water-streets, &c. A serious loss, as well as inconvenience, arises to the public from this source. The expenses attending the delivery of letters are increased some thousands of pounds by the puzzling uncertainty of addresses. A letter from the country, directed "King-street, London," is, perhaps, first delivered in King-street, Cheapside, whence it may be returned with the words, "Try King-street, Holborn," and perhaps 20 district postmen may each have to walk a mile before the right King-street and the right person be discovered. Nor does the fault lie altogether with careless directions. A stranger to London cannot be blamed for ignorance of the extent to which the amplification of an address is necessary. Thinking to be both precise and explicit, he may direct a letter, "John Smith, Water-lane, City, London," and his letter may be sent to three different Water-lanes, all in the city, and all within a stone's throw of each other—Water-lane, Blackfriars; Water-lane, Thames-street; Water-lane, Fleet-street; and perhaps in each Water-lane there may be a John Smith. The evil is one which we believe the corporation of London and the commissioners of paving generally have power to remedy; and we may hope it will be the duty of the new registrar to call their attention to the subject.—[This duty could not well be performed by the board mentioned; it is the duty of Commissioners of Paving and their surveyors, upon whom by the general Metropolitan Paving-Act it is cast.—Ed.]

HAMPSTEAD HEATH.—(From the Times.)—The inhabitants of Hampstead, who have been long threatened by Sir Thomas Maryon Wilson, the lord of the manor, with having their beautiful heath encircled with squares, streets, and courts, and for an Act to enable him to effect which Sir Thomas has petitioned Parliament at intervals, ever since the year 1829, have been in much consternation during the past week, upwards of eighty workmen having been employed in levelling the fences between the various fields belonging to Sir Thomas, between the Vale of Health and Highgate. On the 12th inst. Sir Thomas commenced operations on the heath itself, which, as the copyholders have rights of common and other valuable rights therein, may still, it is hoped, be preserved to the public by the committee of copyholders. Sir Thomas's property immediately adjoins Cuen-wood, the grounds of which will be commanded by the intended cemetery. The committee of copyholders will, it is supposed, call a meeting of the copyholders as early as possible, intimation having already been given to Sir Thomas that the copyholders dispute his right to interfere with the heath, which in his recent applications to Parliament he has always professed he had no intention of doing.

RETRIEVING MUD LANDS.—A proposal is on foot to establish a chartered company for retrieving the mud lands of Great Britain and Ireland, deepening the navigable waters abutting thereon, and appropriating the retrieved lands, and in some instances the waters, in remuneration. The capital it is proposed to raise for this great national object is 500,000l., in five thousand shares of 100l. each.

PUBLIC WALKS, PARKS, &c.—We are glad to find fresh proofs of the general interest manifested in this excellent object, in the rapidly augmenting subscription list, which, since the last list was advertised, has been increased by about 1,780l., and now amounts to nearly 22,500l. The most recent subscriptions include a handsome donation by Mr. W. Atkinson, of 500l., and one of 250l. by our representative, Mr. Miller Gibson, M.P. There are also several liberal subscriptions from a distance, from parties thus gratefully acknowledging and maintaining their connection with the town. Mr. J. Thomson, of Primrose, Clitheroe, has given 100l. Amongst the supporters of the measure in the clergy of the establishment, it gives us pleasure to see the names of two of the canons of Manchester, the Rev. C. D. Wray, and the Rev. R. C. Clifton, for 25l. each. There is another class of subscriptions of which as yet we have only the commencement, but which have a peculiar value, as the contributions of the working classes themselves. These subscriptions are by far the most significant and decisive answer that can be given to those who object, that when parks are provided, the people will not use them. Few will suppose this likely, when they find that the workmen in a calico-printing concern (that of Messrs. Thomas Hoyle and Sons) have subscribed 67l. odd; and those of a machine-making establishment (that of Messrs. Sharp Brothers and Co.) upwards of 50l., in aid of the fund for public walks and parks. If these are not satisfactory proofs of the earnest approbation and cordial support of those for whom these parks are mainly needed, we know not where to seek them.—*Manchester Guardian*.

PROPOSED PUBLIC PARK IN LEEDS.—Some of our benevolent townsmen, among whom we may mention our public-spirited mayor, are desirous that Leeds should not be behind other towns in the formation of public parks or walks for the healthful and rational recreation of all classes. It has been suggested that the zoological and botanical gardens, which comprise nearly 20 acres, in a beautiful situation and well laid out, might be purchased for this purpose. Some of the larger shareholders in the gardens are, we know, disposed to transfer their whole property in them to the town-council, or some other body, for the benefit of the public; and we think it likely that many others would follow this liberal example, thinking it more agreeable to see their fellow-townsmen of the humbler classes enjoying themselves in the gardens than to walk there in comparative seclusion. Those shareholders who took shares as an investment, and who could not afford to give them to the public, would probably accept a moderate sum for that which now yields them no dividend. A subscription would, therefore, be required to purchase the garden for the public; and we think this would be forthcoming, as the amount would probably not be very large. A yearly subscription would also be requisite to keep the gardens in order. We hope to be able shortly to report progress in this laudable attempt to promote the health and recreation of the industrious classes.—*Leeds Mercury*.

NEW BREAKWATER AND HARBOUR OF REFUGE.—We can state now, from unquestionable authority, that it has been decided by government that the port of Weymouth is to form one of the Harbours of Refuge about to be established in the Channel, and that a Breakwater will be built, extending from the eastern part of the island of Portland to a length sufficient to secure a protection for the shipping interest, as well mercantile as naval. This national undertaking will, we hear, be on a grand scale, and being about the centre position in the channel, will be a most efficient harbour of refuge between the two large naval depôts of Plymouth and Portsmouth. It is expected the proprietors of the Great Western railway will promptly avail themselves of this favourable circumstance for laying down a line from Bristol and Bath, through the most advantageous and convenient track of country, to Weymouth, as no doubt this latter port, from its peculiarly apt locality, and becoming a general depôt for shipping, will be hereafter the chief entrepôt and link for commercial connection and transition, through the medium of the channel islands, from the midland counties of England to the Continent.—*Sherborne Journal*.